



Board Meeting Minutes

Date and Location

Wednesday April 24, 2019
6:00 PM
Damar Services, Inc.
6067 Decatur Blvd
Indianapolis, IN 46241

Board Members Present

Lyle Coleman
Chuck Ellis
Tifini McClyde
Karen Snyder
Allyson Strother
Joey Wright

Board Members Absent

Carlos Alexander
Patty Edwards

Others Present (Staff, Public)

Aimee Brown, DCA School Leader
Elaine Showalter, Damar CFO
Julie Gurule, DCA
Cora Collier, DCA
Ken File, Damar Foundation
Paul Dennison, Damar , Finance Director
Katie McCoy, Damar CEA

Approval of Minutes

Formal review and approval of minutes will occur at the 6-26-2019 Board Meeting.

Record of Public Comments

None

Summary of Discussions

The meeting was brought to order at 6:00 pm by Tifini McClyde. Members and staff were welcomed, and all enjoyed dinner. The minutes from the February 2019 meeting were approved.

School Operations/Activities

DCA returned from a two-week Spring Break on Monday, April 8th, to begin the fourth and final quarter of the year. The state assessments are ramping up. The I AM alternate assessment began April 8th and ends May 17th. The ILEARN (formerly ISTEP) testing begins April 22nd and ends May 17th, with the ILEARN Biology Assessment ending May 24th. Various summer retesting opportunities will occur between now and the beginning of the 2019-2020 year as well.

In preparation for the upcoming school year, DCA will be holding the 2019-2020 lottery on Wednesday, May 1st, at 4pm in the DCA cafeteria. It is anticipated that 10 spots will be filled at this time, with more to come as the final list of 2019 graduates is solidified and classroom compositions for the coming year are determined, based on need. Families are welcome to attend, but not required. Julie Gurulé will be working throughout the end of the school year and summer to enroll new students and orient them and their families to DCA. Aimee Brown will begin meeting with new parents and guardians to conduct their move-in case conferences.

DCA's graduation is set for Friday, May 31st, at 6pm in the Damar main campus gymnasium. We are beyond excited to announce our first ever Indiana Academic Honors Diploma recipient, Alec Deuel, at this year's ceremony. Alec plans to attend the University of Indianapolis in the fall to study paleontology.

Curriculum

The newest round of DCA clubs have begun with the start of the final quarter. Offerings continue to be broad ranged, with everything from Sensory to Cooking to Hiking. Molly Wells, the K-2nd grade teacher, and her assistant, Michelle Tolnay, continue to lead the Service to Others Club. We are proud to announce their newest partnership with a local food pantry that will be providing donations of fresh meat and produce to send home with our families on a weekly basis. Molly was recently able to secure a refrigerator donation to hold the goods, and she is working with our families to arrange a pick-up schedule that will continue throughout the summer. Currently, we are feeding 55 students and their respective families each week through our food pantry program. The clothing pantry will kick-off prior to the end of the school year with the help of volunteers through the Kohls Cares for Kids program.

School Safety

Work on the new key card access system for DCA has begun. All school personnel have received new badges that will grant them tiered access, once the new system is fully operational. Phase one of the project will include controlled access from the two interior hallway doors leading from the DCA lobby into the rest of the school. The intercom system for initial access into the school should hopefully be installed prior to the start of next school year. These modifications are closely tied with and like the safety measures being taken at Damar Services.

Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, Matt Hohman will fully transition to the roll of DCA's School Safety Specialist. Matt completed the IDOE's certification training, along with Aimee Brown, in February. His current responsibilities will broaden to include safety, security, intervention and prevention, and emergency preparedness planning. As a result, it was determined that DCA needed an additional support staff to assist with the daily behavioral needs of students, and Damar Services has agreed to provide a full-time Resource Team member.

Fundraising/Grants

DCA is now focused on expenditures for phase two of the Damar Foundation's technology grant. This will target the purchase of Chromebooks for several of DCA's classrooms, and the third and final phase will cover any outstanding software, etc. needs. The goal remains to have all the new technology in place by this summer, so that staff may be trained prior to the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. DCA has begun collaborating with The Brookfield Group, Damar's new contract provider of IT services, to ensure any technology purchased will be able to be fully supported.

Accountability/Performance

Over the last 2-months, DCA Leadership has been working closely with our lobbying firm, Barnes and Thornburg, as the Legislative Session progresses. Always a flurry of activity and positioning, DCA has helped author a bill in the house that supports the alternative accountability for DCA from the traditional A-F model, allows DCA to petition the Board of Education for an alternative grade (from the traditional A-F model) based on the unique make-up of the school and the established alternative accountability model, and allows DCA to request a waiver from the cohort cap percentage restrictions for the issuing of alternative diplomas. If passed, these changes will all be to the benefit of DCA and DCA students.

Governance

Dr. Dalton, Karen Snyder, and Julie Gurulé represented DCA at OEI's inaugural Mayor-Sponsored Charter Schools Board Recruitment Event held at the Rathskeller on March 14th. It was a huge success, with numerous attendees representing businesses and organizations such as Leadership Indianapolis, Lilly, DePauw University, and United Way, to name a few. As a result, we connected with twelve potential candidates whom we have since followed up with. Four interested individuals have already toured DCA, two of which seem to be an excellent fit with both Damar Services' and DCA's missions. Leslie Smith, Executive Director of Alumni Engagement at DePauw University, and Jordan Maitland, Senior Associate of US Public Policy for Eli Lilly and Company, will be meeting with Carlos Alexander and other interested board members in May to continue the vetting process. Additional tours are being scheduled for the remaining interested candidates. As a reminder, DCA has one open board seat.

Finance

For the month ending March 31, 2019, DCA had a negative margin from operations of about \$18,700. The overall annual margin is approximately \$126,000 (compared to the YTD budgeted margin of approximately \$47,700.)

This month's negative margin is due mainly to timing with grant reimbursements. Reimbursements in April and May will create positive margins and increase the annual margin to an estimated \$150,000 before the fiscal year-end.

The balance sheet has remained stable and adequately liquid.

End of Minutes